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Has not the experience of centuries shown that gradualism in theory is perpetuity in practice

—William Lloyd Garrison

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ON THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING YOUR ENEMY: U.S. IMPERIALISM AND MOVEMENT STRATEGY

I
by Vincent Ninelli

Many of those now running around calling themselves libertarians talk in very *general* terms about "statist intervention" as though such an abstraction were in fact the real world enemy. Others, never having rid themselves of their right-wing paranoid perspectives, speak in vague, vulgar and irrelevant cliches about "aggressive" international communism, concentrate their attention on this alleged "monolithic and evil conspiracy," and then unbelievably assume that international communism is today's overriding international enemy. Still others, are unable to differentiate in kind between an intervention such as censorship or census taking, on the one hand, and the slaughtering of hundreds of thousands of peasants, on the other hand, the enormity of the latter having no discernable effect on their set of priorities.

Libertarianism has lately entered into a period of hyper-faddism in the *N.Y. Times* and elsewhere. It is a period which will soon prove to be a crucial turning point in the history and real world worth of libertarianism. Thus far there is little indication that most libertarians have gotten over their Simon Purism (utopian abstractionism) and their age old inability to zero in on real world problems.

As long as this lack of focus on the real world enemy and as long as the inherent anti-Left bias persists among those assuming the title of libertarian, libertarianism will continue on being little more than airy speculation and a very cruel hoax played on the goddess of Liberty. The first task ahead for all serious libertarians is for them to understand and reach a common agreement on just who and what comprises the real enemy. All of the faddism in the world will not make libertarianism a real world force without such an agreement and the hard nosed analysis and organizational work that such a knowledge entails. Without such a knowledge and common agreement libertarians, will have no greater influence during the rest of the century than they have during the years since 1900. With such an agreement perhaps, then, and then only, we can begin to speculate on the "historic mission" and struggle role of libertarianism.

II

The overwhelming, all pervasive international reality of our historical epoch and the greatest enemy that liberty has ever had to face is the ever expanding, menacing reality of U.S. imperialism. There isn't space enough to go into all the Cold War myths or the multi-fabrications of State Depart-

ment and right wing historiography.¹ However, it isn't really necessary because a simple definition of both the State and imperialism should quickly help to clear up most of these misconceptions.

The State is in its essence a political-economic tool fashioned to serve the interests of a ruling or controlling class.² The State is the machinery through which the ruling elite maintains and extends its economic position through the economic exploitation of the productive members of society and by the political-military suppression of the right to self-determination of all those non-ruling class members who live with in that state's monopolistic geographical domain.³

Continuing on with very simple definitions, then, imperialism is simply states as the extra-national extension of the role of the State (i.e., economic exploitation and political-military suppression of the right of self-determination) beyond the borders of the state in question. This extension of the role of the State, then, results, in varying degrees, in the imposition of a *double layer* of statism on the peoples beyond the borders of the expanding state.⁴

Given the definition of imperialism as being the extra-national extension of the State, there is no question but that the United States is clearly an imperialist nation of the highest order. Not only is the United States the *most* imperialist nation now (i.e., interventionist, exploitative, and counter-revolutionary), but it is clearly the most dangerously imperialist nation in recorded history, especially because of advanced mechanized warfare and the nuclear age.

The all too real effect of American foreign policy since the 1890's (not to mention the horrors of continental empire building before that) has been to breed and multiply ever more statist oppression. Ever since the end of WWII, the U.S. government's imperialist policy has stood as the *major* international enemy to self-determination, social justice, liberty and peace.⁵ The U.S. government has established and maintained the greatest engine of aggressive mass destruction ever assembled, beside which the sum total of all other historically aggressive intents and deeds would appear as a giant cream puff. The United States has used this vicious machine again and again to slaughter, loot, bully, and pollute its way all around the globe.

Since the avowed goal of serious libertarianism is the abolition of all forms of statist oppression, it should be clear

that the task ahead for libertarians is to first engage in a penetrating application of their theoretical principles and avowed goals to the real world. In so doing, libertarians will

III

The identification of the U.S. government as *the major* international enemy of liberty and social justice is only one half of the information imparted to us by a clear understanding of the U.S. imperialist system. Foreign and domestic policies are merely two closely interrelated sides of the same coin — the American System.⁶ However, in recent decades the great preponderance of U.S. domestic interventionism and centralization has had as its main source and continuing impetus the global interventionism of American foreign policy.

A clear knowledge of U.S. imperialism is the key which unlocks the door to the understanding of the whole American System. Imperialism is the central overissue around which almost all other issues revolve and relate, either directly or indirectly.

The United States corporate state was originally envisioned and designed to stabilize and maintain centralized control of the domestic economy by a Big Business elite.⁷ On the one hand, that corporate-state vision became the super reality that it has become *primarily* because of the conditions and possibilities provided by the national commitment to overseas political-economic expansionism, the global military interventions which accompanied that expansion, and, of course, the major wars which grew out of that tragic national policy of global empire building receives *its* source of continuing impetus from the domestic needs (both real and conjured up) of a terribly dislocated social and economic system at home.⁸ Each side of the system keeps feeding its own brand of fuel to the rampaging beast in an ever escalating fashion.

The welfare-warfare state consisting of business regulations, centralized monetary-financial management, social welfare legislation (automatic stabilizers) etc. did *not* have its essential origination and implementation in the minds and deeds of "altruist" philosophic liberals who were trying to "socialize" the economy. On the contrary, the source for this centralization rested and continues to rest in the coldly calculating economic motives of a relatively small "internationalist" corporate-financial elite whose seat of *de facto* government is situated in lower Manhattan. And it is primarily from this same source that have come both the ideas and the key personnel for the implementation in Washington of both U.S. foreign and domestic policy for many a decade.⁹

Throughout the postwar era, the U.S. government has been in the business, not only of maintaining the ruling elite's domestic position, but more significantly it has been the tool for maintaining and extending America's control of the whole imperial order of western state-capitalism¹⁰ (i.e., the "free world"). This has been accomplished by a judicious mixture of simply aiding economic expansion, counter-revolutionary co-optation and terrorism, and just plain mass murder. While at home the Keynesian mechanisms have worked amazingly well in maintaining a relatively stable, prosperous economy for most Americans. At the same time the business-government ties have been smoothly cemented

quickly realize that U.S. imperialism is the major international foe of liberty and peace everywhere. The American State is therefore *doubly* the major enemy of all concerned libertarians here in the "mother country."

into a system even far more intimate than a simple partnership.

IV

But the American Empire appears to be moving into what might possibly be the first stages of a period of real crisis. The problems facing Pax Americana are coming in three major forms. First, the fiscal games and expansionist monetary policies of the Keynesian method are beginning to necessarily face the avenging consequences of economic law, both domestically and internationally. There may be no immediate financial crisis, but the problems are substantial.¹¹ These problems can be held off (the short run can be lengthened considerably via the state's powers of taxation and money creation), but they cannot be solved without some drastic change in the current system. This is a constant gnawing problem which clearly has the system managers worried. Something is going to have to give. At some point the problem is going to have to get much worse before it can possibly get better.

Second, over the past several years the American radical movement has stepped up its assault on the legitimacy of many previously sanctified institutions such as conscription, the education system, welfare colonialism, the entire judicial system etc. An increasingly sophisticated attack on U.S. imperialism, as a system, has slowly been moving into the forefront of this assault.

This radical pressure is clearly leading to a "demystification" of many time honored statist institutions among millions of the rising generation. No substantial changes in the foundations of the American system are likely to take place in the near future because of these unmasking attacks, but they are having a continual eroding effect. Of and by itself the radical movement, as such, is certainly a long way from being a real threat to the system, but as the Movement begins to come together again, this very crucial delegitimizing process is sure to continue.

Third, and perhaps the most immediately important aspect of the possibly approaching crisis is that successful movements of self-determination are spreading quickly and convincingly throughout the American Empire. The U.S. is anything but a paper tiger, but the Vietnamese experience in particular (both in Vietnam and at home) has convincingly shown that the might and empire of American imperialism is not invincible. This knowledge has given a sense of confidence and determination to other national liberation movements, not only in southeast Asia, but in the Middle East and Latin America as well.

The spirit of freedom and the desire for social justice is a powerful force, and having been set in motion, this spirit will ultimately produce a whole series of victories for the doubly exploited peoples suffering under the U.S. hegemony. No one can foresee all of the ramifications of shrinking American empire on the domestic situation in the United States, but such a process will certainly cause major disruptions, both political and economic, over the next several decades.

Taken separately, any one of those three aspects might be

able to be controlled, either by co-optation or overt repression. Taken together, these three aspects add up to a very possible crisis of major proportions over the next several

V

A clear understanding of United States imperialism is the first step in identifying the major enemy of liberty, and a proper identification of the enemy is the imperative first step towards reaching any meaningful strategy. As long as libertarians fail to recognize the central importance of U.S. imperialism in both world and domestic events, they will continue to lack a clear perspective and a balanced sense of strategic priority.

Without perspective and a sense of priority, libertarians will continue to take potshots of equal emphasis at everything even remotely reeking of statism, consequently having little concerted influence on the course of events. Lacking a clear understanding of who the real enemy is, libertarianism is destined for an unworthy future of qualitative stagnation and real world irrelevancy, no matter how greatly the "libertarian movement" multiplies quantitatively. A simple

decades. Libertarians should study each of these aspects and consider carefully the strategic implications which they contain.

"opening of the eyes" and a shift in perspective could lead to a significant transformation of this unfortunate and unnecessary state of affairs. Will such a change be forthcoming? We all certainly hope so.

The realization that the U.S. government is the major enemy of liberty, both internationally and domestically, does even more than give one a clear identification of the enemy and a sense of priority for strategy. A clear picture of the enemy helps one to discover friends that he might otherwise have overlooked. Hopefully, all concerned libertarians will, at the very least, move into an empathetic solidarity with the international anti-imperialist (anti-American) movement, and learn to cheer and elicit a sense of inner jubilation with each blow struck against the American Empire. As libertarians adopt such a "left wing" attitude or perspective, something very good will very likely follow.

Footnotes:

- (1) On these points see:

M.N. Rothbard, *Myths of the Cold War*, a reprint pamphlet
David Horowitz, *The Free World Colossus* (Hill & Wang, 1965)
David Horowitz ed., *Corporations and the Cold War* (Monthly Review Press, 1969)
Gabriel Kolko, *The Roots of American Foreign Policy* (Beacon Press, 1969)
Harry Magdoff, *The Age of Imperialism*, Monthly Review Press, 1969)

All of the above are available from LABS

- (2) Albert Jay Nock, *Our Enemy the State* (Caxton, 1946)

- (3) For an excellent view of this point see:

M.N. Rothbard, *The Anatomy of the State*, a reprint pamphlet available from LABS

- (4) It will be noticed that there is absolutely no mention of the traditional Marxist-Leninist theory of imperialism. There are certainly economic pressures for capitalism working within the parameters of the centralized nation-state to become expansionist, but such pressures can, it seems, be traced to interventions into the natural workings of the market process. It seems quite likely that as long as state-capitalism or neo-capitalism exist (i.e., as long as the state and "capitalism" coexist) these expansionist economic pressures will also recur, and with ever increasing ferocity. It is this writer's opinion that the central banking caused business cycle is the single most important of these dislocating interventions which then leads directly to a choice between expansionist foreign policy options, on the other hand. It will be noticed that this analysis of imperialism is much closer to Hobson's than to Lenin's, please see: J.A. Hobson, *Imperialism* (U. of Michigan Press, 1965), especially important are chapters Six and Seven.

- (5) Please see the aforementioned Cold War works plus the following:

Gar Alperovitz, *Cold War Essays* (Schenkman, 1970)
Richard Barnett, *Intervention and Revolution* (Meridian, 1968)
David Horowitz ed., *Containment and Revolution* (Beacon, 1967)

- (6) For far too long domestic and foreign policies have been kept in two separate and distinct boxes, as it were, as though they were two different, unrelated phenomena.

William A. Williams, *The Contours of American History* (Quadrangle, 1966). This work was an extremely important breakthrough in this respect.

Also see the following:

Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire* (Cornell, 1963)
Thomas McCormick, *China Market*, (Quadrangle, 1967)
Carl Parinni, *Heir to Empire* (U. of Pittsburgh, 1970)
Ronald Radosh, *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* (Vintage, 1970)
James Weinstein and David Eakins ed., *For A New America*, (Vintage, 1970), see especially Part I:
William A. Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire*, (Random House, 1969). This work is a monumental

attempt to lay bare the interrelationships between domestic and foreign policy. While there is a great deal of interest and importance in the book concerning the agrarian aspect and influence on the thrust of American politics and expansionism, *The Roots*... is quite disappointing when compared to either of Williams' *The Contours*... or *The Tragedy*... Rather than zeroing in on the financial-corporate elite, as did his mentor Charles A. Beard, or, as did Lenin and Hobson; Williams concentrates his attention on the farmers producing for the market (oh, how terrible!) and concludes that the free market contains within itself the necessary compulsion leading towards an ever accelerating expansion. Rather than State-Capitalism and its financial-corporate elite being the cause of expansion, and hence the enemy, the poor farmers and "free trade imperialism" become the enemy....

For the most remarkable example of a work which shows the interrelation between domestic and foreign policy on a global scale, and deals with events surrounding World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Versailles Treaty etc. see:

Arno J. Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking* (Vintage, 1969)

For the domestic and foreign interrelationships during World War II and the early Cold War period see:

Lloyd C. Gardner, "The New Deal, New Frontiers and the Cold War" in Horowitz's *Corporations*... op. cit.

Lloyd C. Gardner, *Architects of Illusion* (Quadrangle, 1970)

Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* (Random House, 1968)

The Kolko work is a particularly fine undertaking. It is but the first in a multi-volume series dealing with the U.S. and the Cold War.

- (7) For an introduction to the Progressive Era see:

Samuel P. Hays, *Response to Industrialism* (U. of Chicago Press, 1957)

Robert H. Wiebe, *Businessmen and Reform* (Quadrangle, 1968)

Of far more importance, then, are the following works:

Arthur A. Ekrich, Jr., *The Decline of American Liberalism* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1955), especially chapters Eleven through Fifteen

Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of Conservatism* (Free Press of Glencoe, 1963)

Gabriel Kolko, *Railroads and Regulation* (Norton, 1970)

James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State* (Beacon, 1968)

- (8) On this point, see especially:

William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (Delta, 1962) also see the chapter "The Age of Corporation Capitalism" in Williams' *The Contours*... op. cit.

Lloyd C. Gardner, "The New Deal, New Frontiers and the Cold War" in Horowitz's *Corporations*... op. cit.

- (9) For important insights into this aspect see:

G. William Domhoff, *The Higher Circles* (Random House, 1970)

Also see the following:

Domhoff's essay, "Who Made Foreign Policy 1945-1963?" and David Eakin's essay "Business Planners and America's Postwar Expansion" in Horowitz's *Corporations*... op. cit.

- (10) For a superb account of America's "takeover" of the Western Imperial Order see again:
Gabriel Kolko, *The Politics of War* op. cit.
Lloyd C. Gardner, *The Architecture of Illusion* op. cit.
- (11) On these problems see:
James O'Connor "The Fiscal Crisis of the State" in *Socialist Revolution* Vol. I, No. 1, Jan./Feb. 1970 and Vol. I, No. 2, Mar./April 1970. This is a very fine and penetrating study of the fiscal problems both in the present and also on the not so distant horizon.
On the problems of the constantly churning, convoluting activity of the business cycle see:

Murray N. Rothbard, *Economic Depressions: Causes and Cures*, a pamphlet available from LABS
For a more advanced study of the business cycle see the following:
F.A. Hayek, *Prices and Production* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1935)
F.A. Hayek, *Profits, Interest, and Investment* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1939)
Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action*, (Yale, 1963), see especially chapters Seventeen through Twenty.
Murray N. Rothbard, *Man, Economy and State* (Van Nostrand, 1962), see especially chapters Five, Six, Eleven and Twelve.

AMMAN: NEW LESSON IN PEOPLE'S WAR

by Stephen P. Halbrook

The heroic resistance of the Palestinian people against the Amman butchers heralds a new era in the development of people's war in the Mid East. Never before have the real issues shown forth so clearly and thus never before have the tasks of the Arab peoples become so imperative.

The whole Palestinian people was armed, virtually every man and boy in the poor quarters of Amman having an automatic weapon. An armed people is a free people and thus is the major enemy of the State. Hence it was that on Sept. 16 Hussein proclaimed martial law "to secure order and authority of the state" and set out to disarm the Palestinian militias. As the State proceeded to rain its terror and destruction the armed people demonstrated their invincibility. "The crackdown was barbaric and savage-like. It was similar to what happened in Karbala (Iraq, several centuries ago). Complete liquidation of the Palestinian people is being attempted. Casualties total up to 25,000 and there are no 25,000 commandos." — as Jaafar Numeiry noted in his famous report. (*Fateh*, Sept. 30, 1970.) The Jordanian state recognized that the whole people was revolutionary and hence their enemy. "The people helped the fedayeen when we came in," growled a nameless bedouin soldier to a correspondent. But this was not just in Amman. The guerrillas controlled all towns of any size in the north: Irbid, Jarash, Zerqa, Salt, Ajlun. They declared these liberated areas and set up the first soviets in the Arab world, which put all power into the hands of the people themselves.

Every state is the enemy of people's war, not just Jordan. Jordan has ever worked hand in glove with US imperialism, and naturally US tanks and bombs were used to slaughter Palestinian people. Had this aid been insufficient, Nixon was ready with more: already on Sept. 17 he spoke of intervention (the Chicago Sun-Times printed these supposedly "off the record" remarks, and Nixon praised the paper for giving his threat world attention). The US is intent on keeping Hussein in power since he is such an excellent flunkey and puppet. The US supports counterrevolution in the Mid East for two purposes: (1) Oil and other resources. American companies pump out of the ground and sell 60% of all Arab oil. This oil, which provides 42% of the "free" world's oil needs, contributes about \$2 billion annually to the US economy, without which the balance of payments deficit would double. (Cf. *New York Times*, Sept. 23 and Sept. 27, 1970). 70-95% of this oil is used by Japan and US allies in Western Europe. Thus, besides reaping sky high profits, the US has a stranglehold over not only the producing but also the consuming countries. This aids it in its policies of international counterrevolution — which is reason (2). The US cannot tolerate victory of revolution anywhere on the

face of the globe for such is leading to total collapse of the American Empire. It is easy to understand why the Zionist colonial-imperialists urge the US to continue their wanton aggression in Vietnam since the revolutionary Vietnamese are the same enemy as the revolutionary Palestinians.

The Israeli state of course supported the reactionary Jordanian state. Israel was ready to attack tanks coming from Syria and the US was to use the 6th Fleet and other units to safeguard Israel's rear and flanks. At the same time, British aircraft on Cyprus was prepared for aggression. This was unnecessary since the Syrian state, being a state, was incapable of waging people's war, which rests on mass action from below. Statist war is waged from above and can be easily called off. Thus simply because of a power play between Hafez al-Assad, head of the air force, and Saleh Jadid, a fellow Baathist Party member who sent the tank columns into Jordan and complained that the former refused to provide air cover, and also because of pressure from the USSR social-imperialists, the Palestinians were left to die. After the tanks withdrew to Syria, the Jordanian air force and artillery was freed of armored opposition and began savage poundings of liberated zones such as Irbid and Ramtha. Actually, the Soviet Union restrained both Baghdad and Damascus. Consequently Iraq did absolutely nothing; it is revealing that since then, in mid October, Iraq Air Marshal Hardan Takriti was ousted because he advocated strong support for the guerrillas.

The excuse the USSR gave for warning Iraq and Syria not to intervene was that it may cause the US to intervene, which would hurt the revolution. Of course, this pure lip service intended to cover the true nature of the Soviet state. It would have been a good thing had the US sent in troops: public outrage among both the whole Arab and the US peoples as well as another Vietnam abroad would sound a louder death knell for the American Empire. Che's dictum about two, three, many Vietnams was never more relevant. Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) head Yassar Arafat seems to recognize this when on Aug. 16 he said: "Amman shall be the Hanoi of the Middle East." Elsewhere he stated: "We see you (the US) in Viet Nam with a numerical superiority of men under arms on the ground of 7 to 1. This gives us great hope." USSR opposes US intervention because it would be a boon to the whole Arab revolution. USSR supported the Jordanian state because it fears another anti-bureaucratic revolution, i.e., another China, and it does not want to lose its position as junior ruling partner of the world with the US. The two have divided the world up between themselves and seek to perpetuate the status quo spheres of influence. It is no wonder that Israel, US, USSR, and Arab regimes including Jordan and Egypt back the Rogers plan, the true nature of which was worded quite well by Li

Hsien-nien, who recently received the PLO delegation to China: "The 'Rogers plan' now being stepped up for a so-called 'political settlement' of the Middle East question is a criminal scheme plotted by one or two 'superpowers,' in disregard of the destiny of the Palestinian people and other Arab peoples, to redivide their spheres of influence in the Middle East and strangle the cause of the liberation of the Palestinian people at the expense of the interests of the Arab people." (*Peking Review*, Sept. 11, 1970.)

USSR aid to Egypt must be understood with the foregoing in mind. USSR supports Egypt as a base in the Mediterranean for world power plays in alliance with the US and as a wedge in the Mid East for oil and other resources. USSR doles out better weapons to the conservative Egyptian government than to the revolutionary Vietnamese people because the latter may upset the status quo. The Russian government, like every other government, fears people's war; hence it refuses to train and arm the Arab people for people's war and instead supports conservative regimes like Egypt in terms of weapons for conventional war. Likewise does the Egyptian government fear people's war. Hal Draper explains its lip service to the Palestinian cause in these terms: "For Nasser, the Israel issue was a pawn in the inter-Arab struggle for power. It was also a useful distraction from the internal failures of his bureaucratic-military regime, which lacked any progressive domestic program." In addition, Nasser recognized that tension with Israel would give him significant international power; thus just before Nasser's death Nixon was forced to deal with him through Tito. On Oct. 3 the State Department disclosed that interim leaders of the UAR had privately informed Nixon they will continue Nasser's policy of "peaceful settlement" (sic!); Anwar Sadat, Nasser's successor, "pledges" to liberate *only* the land Israel stole in 1967. But the Egyptian government is not a pawn solely to the USSR: it has recently been wooing US capitalists by promising "safe" investments. Increased wealth from such opportunism will play the same role as oil revenue does in Iran, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere: to perpetuate and enhance the power of the government apparatus and to provide consumer goods to bribe the middle class and satisfy the greed of the rich. By no accident Egypt paid lip service to the Amman victims but did not call for overthrow of Hussein's puppet government, which caused the atrocities.

All history is a struggle between people's power and state power. It is just as clear why all states are against the popular Palestinian revolution as it is clear why oppressed peoples all over the world are opposed in their struggle from every quarter where there exists *governments* (defined here as centralized bureaucratic monopolies of coercion standing above the masses). On the one side are the governments of the US, USSR, Israel, Egypt, etc., and on the other side are peoples such as the Palestinians, the Afro-Americans, the Vietnamese, and so forth (hopefully the masses of Egypt, Israel, and elsewhere will eventually sense their oppression and *rise*) as well as a few liberated zones, China for instance. Probably Fateh does not recognize the full implications of *their line* that people's struggles cannot depend on *any* government of the world to aid liberation: "It took many Palestinians not more than 10 years to learn that they cannot achieve justice through the dangerous game of Arab or international power politics and that they cannot trust the

operators in a political casino like the United Nations." (From the Fateh pamphlet *Revolution Till Victory*.)

Those first years from 1948 brought about the initial education through struggle of the Palestinian people: the lesson was that people cannot depend on governments for liberation. There have been other significant "seminars" which taught the superiority of people's war over statist conventional war; thus the June War of 1967 proved that aggression of al-Karamah in March 1968 demonstrated that people's war can result in major defeats against Israeli tanks and planes. Now the Amman lesson is that every government is inherently counterrevolutionary, that the governments of the world together gang up on the people when the people threaten them, and that the people must overthrow the government nearest them (Jordan) before they can move on to the next (Israel).

Just as the attacks by the Israeli government led to greater solidarity among the Arab people, likewise the vicious oppression by the Jordanian government led to strengthening of the revolutionary movement. As Arafat said on Oct. 10: "There is a saying in Arabic, 'The blow that does not break my back strengthens me.'" All commando groups are speaking in terms of new unity within PLO, including the Syrian Baathist-sponsored As Saiqa, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (already on Sept. 16 the PLO Central Committee announced reinstatement of the PFLP, which had been suspended the Saturday before because of the plane hijackings), and even Al Ansar (formerly pro-Moscow, it engaged in heroic armed struggle in Amman; reversal of its pacifist policy may lead to its admission to PLO).

The Oct. 13 Hussein-Arafat pact gave PLO great concessions, including the right of the people to be armed, to operate anywhere, and to continue their popular parallel institutions. Yet these are mere paper concessions dictated to Hussein because of his dismal failure to execute genocide on the Palestinian people. "We are all 'Fedayeen,'" this US lackey said in 1968, but that has not prevented him from butchering fedayeen. Good examples in Amman of the methods the Jordanian government will resort to was the massacring of patients at the Ashrafieh hospital by bedouins with axes as well as the shelling of the Wahdat refugee camp both during and after the "cease fire."



Unfortunately, the sovereignty of the Jordanian government was recognized in the pact. Actually it has always been Fateh's line to limit their goal solely to overthrow of the Israeli state and take a laissez faire attitude towards the Arab reactionary regimes. This is an unrealistic attitude in view of the Amman experience, which confirmed the position of PFLP head George Habash that to defeat Israel it is first necessary to defeat the Arab reactionary governments. Habash predicted Hussein's terror and machine-gunning of masses of people, and welcomed such struggles as the only way the Palestinians could be educated as to their tasks. The PFLP sees four enemies — Israel, the world Zionist movement, imperialism (led by the US), and Arab reaction — all of which must be overthrown in order to liberate the homeland. "In the light of the definition of these (4) parties and our perception of the connections which bind them together, it becomes clear that our strongest enemy, the real and main enemy, is world imperialism, that Arab reaction is but one of its offshoots, and that Israel's power lies in its being one of the bases of world imperialism which is providing it with all sources of power and converting it into a big military force possessing the technological superiority and the economy which enable it to survive in spite of the conditions under which it lives." (PFLP, *A Strategy for the Liberation of Palestine*, Amman, 1969.) PFLP emphasizes reliance on the workers, peasants, and revolutionary petit bourgeoisie and a revolutionary mass party to support their interests. Class war is also a major point since the statist bourgeoisie is linked with the Israeli economy as well as world imperialism.

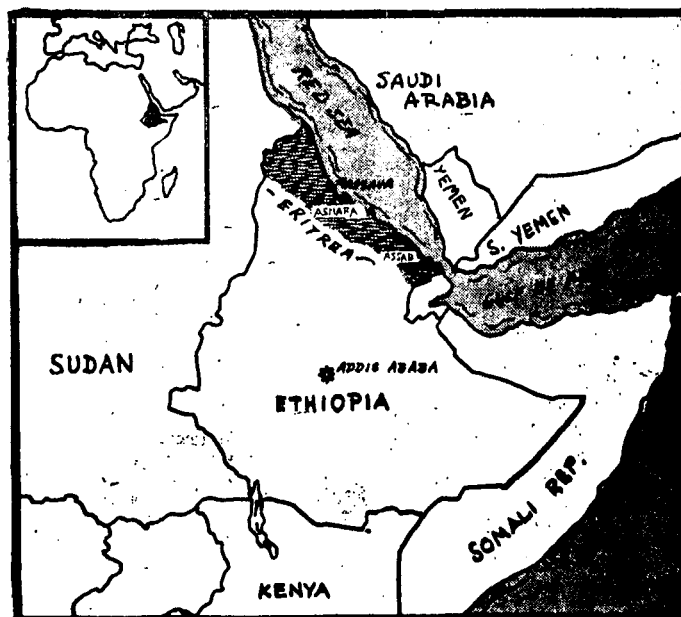
While the PFLP line emphasizes libertarian goals and methods, a clearer and more concise exposition which shows the real issue between state power and people's power was written by Naif Hawatme, head of the Democratic Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, which split from PFLP. Most important is its slogan: "Conventional War is the War of the Bourgeoisie. Revolutionary War is People's War." The reason: "Under the guise of the national question, the (Arab) bourgeoisie has used its armies to strengthen its bureaucratic power over the masses, and to prevent the workers and

peasants from acquiring political power. . . . The national bourgeoisie usually comes to power through military coups and without any activity on the part of the masses, as soon as it has captured power it reinforces its bureaucratic position. . . . The bourgeoisie always concentrated hopes on a victory outside the state's boundaries, in Palestine, and in this way they were able to preserve their class interests and their bureaucratic positions." (Text of platform reprinted in ed. 2 of Laqueur's *Reader*.) Consequently the call is made for revolution in both regions of Jordan.

Yet Fateh, claiming to be interested in action and desiring support from Arab states, sees the struggle as a purely national one and refuses to recognize the real struggle as struggle between state privileged vs. state oppressed classes, i.e., between rulers and ruled. This tendency to think in non-class terms also manifests itself in their solution: a one man-one vote "representative" government which will give "equal opportunity" to all — as if every state is not a class state and a racist state. Waging of true people's war will not and can not result in any entity similar to the bourgeois conception known as representative government — rather the effects of people's war are popular, decentralized institutions from below.

As Israeli aggression mounts more and more the Arab masses are drawn into the struggle. There will be more Ammans at the same time since Arab reaction cannot tolerate the people's war ruthless Israeli attacks provoke. This will in turn be a boon to the revolutionary upsurge from the armed masses, who are forced to destroy the Arab governments in order to continue the struggle. Finally the US

imperialists will be forced to intervene, after which the victory of the Palestinian people against every State in the world can be consummated only by people's war on an international scale, i.e., by active solidarity of all Asian, African, and Latin American peoples engaging in anti-bureaucratic revolution and waging people's war against the imperialist monster wherever it raises its dying head.



REVOLUTION IN ERITREA!

by John Brotschol

Overshadowed by the Arab-Israeli conflict to the north, Eritrean guerrillas have taken up arms in an attempt to free themselves from a 79 year old emperor. His name is Haile Selassie and from his throne in Addis Ababa, he "rules" one of the most backward countries in Africa, Ethiopia; and Eritrea since December 1962 has been one of its thirteen provinces.

Before discussing current aspects of the liberation struggle, some background information is necessary. Eritrea is a coastal strip of 700 miles running from Sudan in the north to French Djibouti in the South. It borders on the Red Sea in the east and without Eritrea, Ethiopia would be landlocked. Over the last century and a half, Eritrea has been the victim of imperialism, being controlled by the Turks, Egyptians, Sudanese, Italians, British, the United Nations and Ethiopia. From 1941 until 1970, Eritrea has had four sets of rulers.

After Italy's defeat in World War II, Great Britain was in control of this colony and wanted to stay. The United States also was knee deep in Eritrea because of their recent acquisition of the British military communications facility in Asmara in 1942. At the Allied Conferences in Teheran and Yalta, Joseph Stalin intimated that he too would like to administer Eritrea — under a postwar international trusteeship arrangement. Italy pleased that it should be allowed to continue its "civilizing mission" in Africa. Haile Selassie also staked a claim on Eritrea, noting that he had been the first victim of Fascist aggression in 1935, and that the assault on his Empire was launched from Italian Eritrea. Selassie also claimed cultural ties with the Christians of Eritrea. The clash between these diverse interest groups lasted years with a stalemate resulting. The Allies finally threw up their greedy hands and agreed in the Italian Peace Treaty of 1947 that the matter of Eritrea "shall be referred to the General Assembly of the United Nations for a recommendation and the Four Powers agree to accept the recommendation and to take appropriate measures for giving effect to it." As in the past, the Eritreans had little to say about their political future.

The United Nations debated the Eritrean situation for three years and produced more than 100 resolutions, none of which had majority support. They included Eritrean independence, Ethiopian annexation, the awarding of a U.N. trusteeship to Italy or the partition of the territory, giving Ethiopia the eastern (largely Christian) portion including the two main seaports, and ceding the western (largely Moslem) half to the Sudan, then a British territory. However, the division of the population was not so clearly defined.

A U.S. supported compromise was reached on December 2, 1950 that stated, "Eritrea shall constitute an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown." The new federation took effect on September 15, 1952. The federation was very one sided, Ethiopia controlled defense, foreign affairs, currency, finance, commerce and port administration of Eritrea. Eritreans composed only 8 percent of the Ethiopian population and account for a substantial part of the country's export earnings and had a literacy rate far above the national average but under this arrangement, they surrendered their economic power to Haile Selassie and his feudal state. As a result of

this forced federation, the Eritrean economy went into stagnation. Economic development ground to a halt and unemployment rose. After 10 years of federation, Eritrea was rapidly on the decline. The obvious cure was more centralism. Haile Selassie and his puppet, the Eritrean Unionist Party forced the colony's Assembly to vote for full integration into the Ethiopian Empire. On December 1962, Eritrea became one of Ethiopia's thirteen provinces. However, as John Franklin Campbell asserts in the April 1970 edition of the CFR's *Foreign Affairs*, the main forces that pushed annexation were international. Arab nationalism was on the rise. Moslem Sudan was now independent and building its own army. Neighboring Somalia achieved independence in 1960. Christian Ethiopians were afraid of being encircled by Moslems, so Selassie moved to secure the vital Red Sea coastline. Eritrea's Moslem population, which composes 50% of the 1.6 million people, did not favor annexation, fearing the loss of their rights.

They organized the Eritrean Liberation Front to struggle for self-determination. The ELF has received limited arms support from the Arab countries (amount determined by Arab-Israeli developments), Red China and Cuba. Up to 1969, however, the Liberation Front's military achievements have been nil. In the largest single engagement against a remote commando police encampment at Hal-Hal in northwestern Eritrea, the ELF was routed in a one-day battle, leaving 60 dead on the field. They have also suffered from the terrain of Eritrea, which is mostly a vast, often hilly desert with only sparse bush cover. This has made it easy for U.S. planes on "mapping expeditions" to spot the ELF and give the information to the Ethiopian Army.

As I mentioned earlier, the United States maintains the Kagnew Station, a \$60 million complex run by the Signal Corps and U.S. Navy communications specialists in Asmara. Over 1,000 U.S. servicemen and their families live in Eritrea to administer this base. Kagnew Station is one of the twenty-three U.S. communication centers in the world and with the tension in the Mideast, it takes on new importance. Ethiopia is also the only country in this area which allows the United States overflight, landing and port rights. Needless to say, the U.S. does not want Ethiopia to lose Eritrea. The Africa Research Group, in the January 27, 1971 edition of the *Liberated Guardian* details U.S. military involvement. "Since 1953 the U.S. has given \$159 million in military assistance to Ethiopia. This amounts to nearly half the total U.S. military aid to all African countries since that time. For 1970, military assistance to Ethiopia was \$12 million — almost two-thirds of the total for all Africa." Two-thirds of the Ethiopian Army of 40,000 men are used in Eritrea. The U.S. consul-general in Asmara is Murray Jackson, a counter-insurgency specialist whose last assignment was in Vietnam. Israel, in an effort to block Arab solidarity has sent a team of military personnel to train the Ethiopian commando police force which battles the guerrillas.

Despite U.S. and Israeli assistance to Haile Selassie's forces, Eritrea has begun to turn the tide beginning in the spring of 1969. Syria has been training ELF cadre in guerrilla warfare, so when they are smuggled home, they can pass on their skills. This combined with the knowledge obtained through revolutionary struggle has proved most beneficial to the Eritreans. During March and April, uniformed ELF

troops appeared on the Massawa-Asmara Highway to blow up oil tanker trucks. On March 11, an explosion destroyed an Ethiopian Air Lines commercial jet parked in Frankfurt, Germany. Two months later, the ELF struck again, blowing up another Ethiopian jet in Karachi, West Pakistan. In August, a smaller plane was hijacked to Aden. Ethiopia's national flag airline is one of the country's biggest foreign exchange earners. This new ELF tactic has so worried Ethiopian officialdom that armed guards are now on its planes. In September 1969, Jackson was kidnapped while traveling to Keren, seventy miles from Asmara. He was held seven hours and released after the guerrillas told him about their plight. Jackson then reported their position and the Ethiopian Army destroyed the houses in the town nearby.

In 1969, both Sudan and Somalia on the Red Sea fell to anti-West Arab nationalists. These developments have increased Eritrea's strategic importance and intensified the conflict.

On November 21, 1970, the guerrillas ambushed an army convoy on the road to Keren and killed Major General Teshome Erghetu, commander of Ethiopia's Second Army.

On December 16, the government declared a state of emergency to crush the guerrillas. Detention camps were set up and boys over nine were herded into them. The Ethiopian Army roved the countryside burning and looting as thousands of Moslem Eritreans fled in terror to neighboring Sudan. The U.S. State Department has responded to this crisis by saying, the refugees are only nomads "who wander back and forth and do not recognize national borders." There are over 50,000 homeless Eritreans in Sudan as a result of the Ethiopian reign of terror. The United National Relief and Works Agency disagrees, stating that the Eritreans are "real refugees, not nomads." What's more the UNRWA is settling 25,000 Eritreans at Umn Saqata in Sudan's Kassala Province. The Swedish Red Cross has set up a hospital and two dispensaries in this settlement.

According to U.S. officials and the Council on Foreign Relations member, John Franklin Campbell, this revolution is caused by the succession of different rulers. Sure enough, the Eritreans didn't like being a pawn in the international game of Russian roulette but what they want is self-determination, not imperial edicts from Addis Ababa and Washington.

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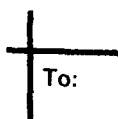
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